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CIA Tells How 'Crackpot' Led To Spy Abel's Arrest

By JAMES MACNEES

(Washington Post and Times Herald)

Washington, Aug. 29 (AP)—Col. Rudolph Ivanovich Abel, in 1957 was given to members of the American Bar Association in convention here today.

And that background revealed that the United States Central Intelligence Agency will listen to anyone, however crackpot he may seem, in its quest for "information of value in the cold war."

C. Tracy Barnes, a senior official of the CIA, spelled out the steps leading up to the apprehension, trial and conviction of Colonel Abel on charges of operating a military and atomic espionage ring for the Kremlin.

Operated 10 Years

Colonel Abel lived in Brooklyn, used assumed names, posed as an artist and photographer and operated unsuspected for almost ten years.

His information was transmitted to Russia by shortwave radio from his apartment, or by microdot, or in containers cleverly fashioned from pills, coins, cuff links, and toothpaste tubes.

He is fluent in English, German, French and Italian and is a trained electronics engineer and an expert photographer. He sketches, paints, studies Einstein for fun and plays classical Spanish guitar music after the manner of Segovia.

He is now serving a 30-year term in the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta.

Messages For Wife

Abel was trapped by information given by a fellow Russian who had the disconcerting habit of standing in the middle of a Paris street, holding one hand aloft with finger extended like an antenna and tapping the other hand against his chest.

He told officials he was sending messages to his wife in America.

The man, who was described by

Barnes as "a pudgy, harried Russian named Hayhanen," walked into the United States Embassy in Paris, showed his American passport and said he was a Soviet agent, a member of the same organization as Colonel Abel who was returning to Russia on leave, but didn't want to go.

He said he was afraid to go back to the Soviet Union and wanted to defect.

"At first he seemed a charter member of the large fraternity of crackpots," Barnes said. "He was under a great emotional stress."

But some of the things he told officials, on being checked, sounded genuine enough and he was returned to the United States where the Federal Bureau of Investigation traced Hayhanen's superior, Col. Abel, called "Mark," to a studio in Brooklyn.

Tells Message Drops

Despite his "transmitting" habit, Hayhanen told of such message drops as a hole in a cement wall on Jerome avenue, New York City, a bench in Riverside Park, the space in a particular lamp post in Fort Tryon Park, the iron fence on Macombs Dam Bridge.

These convinced intelligence officials that there was enough truth in the man to go along with him. In the last ten years 21 Russians have been expelled from the United States for spying activities. They operated under the guise of official assignment.

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